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## **Introduction**

Industrial Relations (IR) within the United Kingdom's (UK's) coal industry during the Second World War was turbulent, while the vital importance of coal production to the war economy meant that industrial disputes within mining were politically salient. Miners, mineowners, and the government interacted to govern coalfield IR in an environment characterised by mutual distrust, industrial conflict, and shifting power relationships. The regionally constituted nature of the industry meant that these institutional dynamics operated at regional levels and were especially apparent within more militant coalfields such as south Wales.

Clegg (1994, 239) argued that 'an assessment of strikes in the Second World War [...] has to start with coalmining' as it accounted for around half of strikes and days lost across all industries from 1940 to 1944. Two types of studies have assessed strikes and the governance of IR within the coal industry. The first is national surveys of the industry incorporating a focus on IR, reflecting Dunlop's seminal conception (1957) of an IR system as one formed from institutions representing the interests of employers, workers, and the state. In his official history of the wartime industry, Court (1951, p. 391) concludes that 'no other major British industry carried so many unsolved problems into the war; none brought more out'; while Supple (1987, p. 497) argued in his survey examining 1913 to 1946 that the 'wartime story of coalmining was neither happy nor, in organizational terms, particularly successful'. Of the three institutional types within wartime national IR, unions have been studied most frequently. Examples includes Arnot's (1961; 1979) and Howell's (1996) assessments of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, and Taylor's exploration (2003) of its successor from 1945, the National Union of Mineworkers. Studies of wartime government activities are subsumed within national surveys,

while there is a paucity of research on the employers' association, the Mining Association of Great Britain.

The second type of assessment explores regional coalfields. A prominent focus is also institutional, again on unions. In south Wales, for example, Francis and Smith's (1981) study of the South Wales Miner's Federation (SWMF), known generally as the 'Fed', between 1898 and 1944 included analysis of wartime activities while Fishman (1998; 2010a; 2010b) explored the career of Arthur Horner, SWMF President from 1936. But analysis of the Monmouthshire and South Wales Coalowners Association (MSWCA) is limited to the nineteenth century (Williams, 1995). Meanwhile, the government's Regional Control that had strategic responsibility over the industry from 1942 is absent from the literature. Similar research patterns apply to other coalfields.

Nevertheless, other foci of wartime regional study exist. One is the politics of organised labour, where researchers have explored the activities of the Labour, Communist and Independent Labour Parties within coalfields including South Wales, Scotland, and Cumberland (Gildart, 2009; McIlroy and Campbell, 2011). A second focus is workforce experiences of IR, where studies have included Broomfield's (1981) exploration of how entrenched dissatisfaction as to pay and conditions drove eruptions of discontent from apprentice miners in south Wales. Finally, McIlroy and Campbell (2003a; 2003b) considered both foci through studies of industrial turbulence in Scottish coalfields from 1941, exploring interactions between political factions in the context of the government's outlawing of strikes.

Less commonly considered, however, are wartime interactions between regional level union, employer, and state organisations, and how these shaped coalfield IR. This research gap is

important because the industry was organised regionally. Coalfields had distinctive social, commercial, and physical characteristics, prompting regional interest institutions. Owners were organised into self-governing regional employers' associations based around coalfields, loosely grouped into the national Mining Association of Great Britain. A similar pattern existed on the employee side, where regional unions were independent entities within the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. But the Federation 'often seemed more a collection of disparate unions than a national body' (Howell, 1996, p. 36). The post of general secretary was not full time until 1919, while the executive was mostly formed from officers of regional unions representing larger coalfields such as south Wales who owed their primary loyalty to such unions (Taylor, 2003). The structure of both national representative organisations was reflected by their leading figures. MSWCA Chair Sir Evan Williams led the mineowners' national association, while the SWMF President Horner played a key role within the miners' national federation. Meanwhile, the eclipse of national bargaining machinery after 1926 meant that both national organisations had limited IR responsibilities throughout the 1930s, while the mineowners' national association avoided formal negotiations with the miners' national federation. Meanwhile, state structures to govern or influence regional activity were absent.

This article seeks to address the regional gap in the literature by using a case study of the south Wales coalfield to ask: how did the three institutions interact to govern coalfield IR? South Wales has two merits as a case study. One is that it was one of the most militant coalfields with correspondingly turbulent IR and a well organised regional union determined to secure IR reforms; it was towards the forefront of efforts across all coalfields to reform IR governance. The other is that governance patterns were broadly similar throughout all UK coalfields; there were few 'south Wales only' aspects meaning that the case also represents broader trends driving IR governance throughout the industry.

The article is based on primary data drawn from the records of the SMWF, the MSWCA and the government. The latter encompass the south Wales Regional Controller at the Ministry of Fuel and Power, as well as Board of Trade regional data that detail the location, cause, duration, number of strikers, days lost, and method of settlement for each strike. These regional data are absent from the literature except in relation to Scotland (McIlroy and Campbell, 2003a).

This article proposes that institutional IR within the regionally constituted coal industry should be analysed through a regional lens, as opposed to a national approach. It makes two arguments. One is that the war transformed the relative power of the main IR actors, given the need to produce sufficient coal to fuel the war economy. The SWMF offered co-operation to boost production, arguing that resolving IR problems would facilitate greater production. But this involved managing and mitigating workforce discontent as to pay and conditions symbolized by the volume of unofficial strikes, a difficult balancing act that ultimately was performed successfully. The MSWCA, however, sought to maintain pre-war approaches. They exploited their political relationships with elements of the governing coalition to maintain ownership, but lost ground within IR and by 1945 had shifted their position to join an emerging consensus that there could be no reversion to pre-war approaches. Finally, the state was reluctant to intervene, but ongoing crises forced it to act to encourage and enable orderly IR.

The other argument is that shifts in relative power enabled the SWMF, and other regional unions, to achieve their goals within IR; the recreation of national bargaining machinery, and higher wages. A regional closed shop was created after the outbreak of war, national wage premiums were layered onto regional agreements in 1940, voluntary national wages bargaining machinery existed by 1943, and in the following year, the government took direct control of negotiations to impose a settlement that met union demands. Meanwhile, trends in miners' pay

reversed their 1939 position near the foot of all industries by 1945. Nevertheless, the Fed and its counterparts failed to obtain nationalization. Although the government's 'dual control' system from 1942 forced owners to share management responsibility with state appointed regional controllers, ownership was unchanged by the end of the war.

### **The 'World of South Wales', 1875-1939**

The south Wales coalfield was a spectacular example of the coalmining boom of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Production quadrupled from 14.2 million tons in 1875 to 56.8 million in 1913 as employment grew from 72,643 to 233,134 (Williams, 1985, p. 300). By 1913, south Wales accounted for 19.8 per cent of UK output, behind only the Northern region of England formed from the Durham, Northumberland, and Cumberland coalfields (Supple, 1987, p. 21). Meanwhile, the coalfield was largely dependent on exports, given that 61 per cent of its 1913 output was shipped abroad (HMSO, 1946, p. 44).

Rapid expansion combined with geographic features to create a distinctive settlement pattern and culture. The coalfield lay beneath an upland area characterised by parallel valleys running from north to south. Most lacked the space to accommodate traditional urban centres, so settlements were formed from lines of terraced housing near open hillsides. While some valleys also housed other industries, the scale and density of mining combined with geographic constraints to crowd out secondary manufacturing or the development of a middle class. The result was working-class settlements where social, cultural, and economic life often focused on the pits. Economic, geographical, and social factors combined to create a dynamic and self-confident region, a 'World of South Wales' (Smith, 1993). But despite an amenability to labour organisation, owners' opposition meant that union development was fraught and protracted.

The SWMF finally emerged as a dominant union in 1898 and the least unionised coalfield in Britain became one of its most organised and radical (Williams, 1982).

But industrial success was short-lived, and two trends impacted the coalfield after the First World War. One was economic. A break in global growth curtailed overseas demand and coal exports from south Wales fell sharply, while depression reduced domestic demand. The other was within IR. The industry was nationalised from 1916 as a wartime measure and national wages machinery was created. But the industry was returned to private ownership in 1921. Wages were calculated thereafter through a district ‘ascertainment’ profit-sharing system that sat within a national framework. This approach prompted sharp reductions in pay that presaged bitter disputes and the defeat of organised labour in 1926. Defeat catalysed the imposition of purely district level wage agreements, and the revision of organizational practices and profit-sharing calculations to favour the owners (Supple, 1987).

Turbulence became protracted crisis as mining employment fell by 31 per cent from 1919 to 1929 (Williams, 1985, p. 300). Employment continued falling into the 1930s, prompting prolonged suffering. In the Rhondda, for example, unemployment peaked at 52.9 per cent in 1932 and remained at 45.9 per cent three years later (Wales National Industrial Development Council, 1937, p. 75). Public health declined, and many thousands of people fled to more prosperous regions. But governments had little interest in intervention, preferring *laissez faire* and restricting welfare through the hated ‘means test’ (Ward, 2014). The state encouraged distribution cartels and commercial amalgamations to mitigate competition, but these did little to address the causes of unemployment. Governments focused instead on addressing the consequences of unemployment through schemes that transferred unemployed workers to areas outside of Wales where jobs were available (Staines, 1996). But political pressure grew, and in

1934 forced the government to implement regional policy. The most deprived regions, such as the coalfield, were designated 'special areas' where commissioners were appointed to promote improvements, but they lacked resources and had little impact.

The result was a radicalised and embittered labour force, spurring what Francis and Smith (1981, p. 54) described as an 'alternative culture' rejecting 'social, political, and cultural norms'. But although membership density was less than 50 per cent in 1934,<sup>1</sup> the union could retain relevance and embed collective approaches through welfare provision (Thompson, 2009). Although the Labour Party dominated coalfield politics, the Communist Party had some localised strengths such as those in the Rhondda, and was influential within the Fed where many prominent activists and officials were Party members (Leeworthy, 2018). Communist influence within the Fed was reflected by its marshalling of support for the Republican cause during the Spanish Civil War, including substantial collective financial contributions (Francis and Smith, 1981). From 1937, the SWMF was led by Horner, a former Baptist youth preacher turned Communist activist who sought to achieve radical change through pragmatic and practical approaches. When imprisoned in 1932 for unlawful assembly, he read Clausewitz's 'On War' with 'very great interest' recalling how the book influenced him to 'mobilise our forces with the same care as a successful general' by starting only those disputes that offered 'a good chance of winning' (Horner, 1960, pp. 125-126). His employer counterpart was Williams, an influential industrialist who led the MSWCA from 1913, and the Mining Association of Great Britain from 1919. He represented a concentrated industry, where five companies accounted for over two thirds of coalfield output by the late 1930s (Williams, 1996).

By 1939 organisational endurance and national economic recovery prompting greater demand for coal helped the Fed to defeat company unionism (Smith, 1972), secure a district agreement



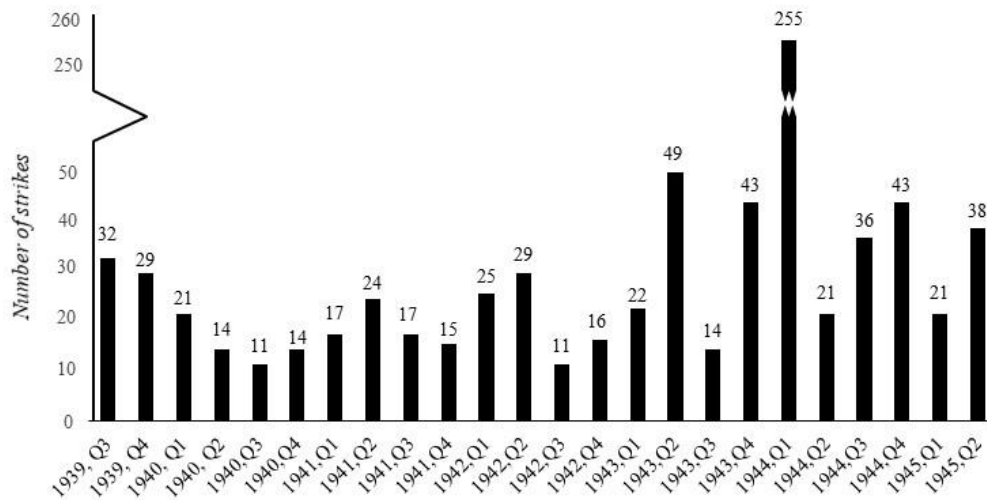
simplifying grading and boosting wages, and reinvigorate conciliation processes. Nevertheless, recovery and rearmament had little impact in the south Wales special area where unemployment was 35.4 per cent in May 1938, almost treble the Britain wide average of 13.4 per cent (HMSO, 1938, Appendix III). But although wages and conditions remained subject to district-level bargaining, the first stirrings of a renewed national IR machinery appeared in 1936 when a Joint Standing Consultative Committee was established, formed from union and employer representatives to discuss all 'questions of common interest' (Clegg, 1994, p. 30).

All this meant that by 1939, miners' views on IR were influenced by three dynamics: acute concern as to actual or potential industrial decline and its social impacts; endemic distrust as to the motivations and behaviour of mineowners and governments; and the need for their interests to be represented collectively by an effective and determined union.

### **Strikes in the south Wales coalfield, 1939-1945**

The coalfield contained 322 pits in 1943, of which 214 employed more than 50 miners and accounted for 98.6 per cent of all output (HMSO, 1946, p. 59). There were 817 strikes between the third quarter of 1939 and the second quarter of 1945 even though strikes were illegal and unofficial from mid-1940. Despite illegality, more than half of all strikes ended after the workforce obtained concessions or the promise of further investigation, otherwise work resumed unconditionally. The number of strikes initially fell from 32 in the third quarter of 1939 to 11 in the third quarter of 1940 (see graph 1) before a fluctuating trend saw strikes reach 49 in the second quarter of 1943. Strikes were frequent thereafter and peaked at 255 in the first quarter of 1944 before remaining common as the war in Europe ended.

**Graph 1: Number of strikes in the south Wales coalfield, Q3 1939-Q2 1945**

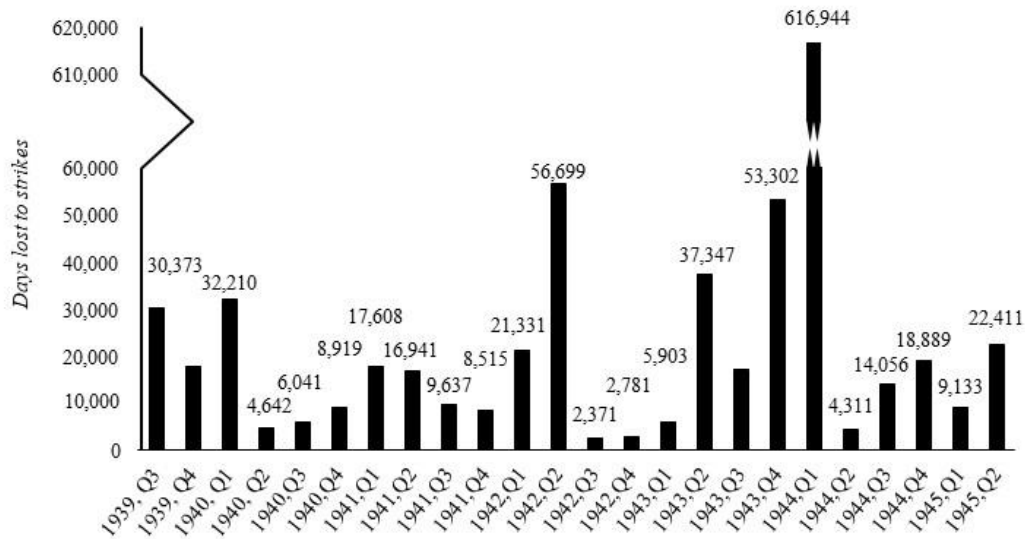


*Source: The National Archives, LAB 34/54-57. Trade Disputes.*

Note: Strikes recorded as per pit. Some pits recorded more than one strike in one quarter.

Strikes were generally short. Ninety-three percent lasted five days or fewer and half lasted a day or less, but their number meant that over a million working days were lost.<sup>2</sup> Days lost reflected the pattern of strikes although with some distortion given the varied sizes of pit workforces. The numbers of days lost were relatively high until mid-1940 (see graph 2) after which they stabilised at a lower level until early 1942. They then peaked at 56,699 in the second quarter of 1942, before subsiding in the subsequent three quarters. But discontent peaked in the first quarter of 1944 when 616,944 days were lost, some 60 per cent of the wartime total.

**Graph 2: Days lost to industrial action in the south Wales coalfield, Q3 1939-Q2 1945**



*Source: The National Archives, LAB 34/54-57. Trade Disputes.*

Turbulent IR ran parallel to production crises. Mining employment fell by 15 per cent between 1939 and 1945 from 128,774 to 110,057 employees but annual output over the same period fell by 42 per cent, from 35.3 thousand tons to 20.5 thousand tons (Williams, 1985, p. 300).

Four periods are discernible when analysis of these data is combined with those on IR governance. The first is from the outbreak of the war until the fall of France in mid-1940. The SWMF secured a preliminary closed shop and nationally negotiated pay premiums to offset increases to the cost of living. District agreements, however, remained while the government was reluctant to intervene in coalfield governance. The second period, from mid-1940, was characterised by the state’s continuing reluctance to intervene despite the anger of miners as to pay and conditions even as the Fed sought to curb discontent and maximise production. The third period from early 1942 to early 1944 saw the deteriorating state of the industry force the government to appoint a pay commission that mandated an award, develop national negotiating machinery, and create a cumbersome ‘dual control’ approach where mineowners and a state-

appointed Regional Controller theoretically shared governance responsibility. The final period began with the largest wave of strikes of the war, prompted by the government's mishandling of a national pay award after which it was forced to abandon its voluntarist approach and assume direct control of bargaining.

## **1: August 1939 to May 1940**

Miners began the war in a disgruntled mood, uncertain as to their prospects and mindful of recent experiences. There were 13 strikes in August 1939; two were underway when war broke out. One was at West Blaina colliery where a dispute over piece work payments prompted 130 miners to strike for 12 days before work resumed with no concessions made, the other was at Cwm Cynon colliery where 23 miners struck for a day after a ventilation fan stopped.<sup>3</sup>

The 'phoney war' of late 1939 and early 1940 was characterised by complacency. In January 1940, the Ministry of Labour noted the lack of labour supply problems in the coalfield while the Board of Trade observed 'strong demand' from overseas markets.<sup>4</sup> Mineowners and government were content with the industrial status quo. MSWCA Chair Williams wanted to minimise change so that the industry could 'glide almost imperceptibly from a war position to a peace position without having all those tremendous upsets that we had in the last war'.<sup>5</sup> The government did little to disturb the state-mandated marketing and distribution cartels developed during the 1930s, while the two mechanisms it created in April 1940 were advisory. One was a tripartite Coal Production Council comprising representatives of the owners, unions, and the Board of Trade's Mines Department, including a south Wales joint committee to enable both sides to discuss any issues.<sup>6</sup> The other was district and pit production committees, formed from worker and management representatives to advise on production and absenteeism.

One task facing the SWMF was to decide its attitude to the war as many members opposed the conflict on 'anti-imperialist' grounds given the government's hostility to the Soviet Union. Although Horner was pragmatically enigmatic given his membership of the Communist Party (Fishman, 2010), he was committed to the war effort. A delegate conference in February 1940 supported a resolution combining support for the war with a call for social justice by 3 to 1,<sup>7</sup> prompting Horner to announce his intention to pursue policies with majority support. He was willing to co-operate with mineowners and the state to boost production, and obtain concessions in return, but the government was keen to avoid intervention. Reluctance was typified in October 1939 when Horner led a deputation to London to ask the Mines Department to keep a pit in Cross Hands open given the Fed's view that profitability should be of 'secondary importance' during wartime.<sup>8</sup> However, Under-secretary of Mines Sir Alfred Faulkner responded that he could not provide subsidy or compel a mine owner to work at a loss, arguing that it was 'entirely up to the men to make it a paying proposition'.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless, the SWMF secured its first wartime IR advance in late 1939 when the pre-war defeat of company unions was crowned with a preliminary closed shop agreement. Fearing that further dispute might prompt the 'the danger of [government] interference', the MSWCA promised 'any assistance' in ensuring that all miners joined the union,<sup>10</sup> although the Fed opposed employer deduction of dues fearing a weakening of its pit-level organisation. Meanwhile, district wage agreements continued but the national Joint Standing Consultative Committee became a bargaining forum where uniform flat rate additions to offset rising living costs were negotiated (Court, 1951, p. 232) despite what the MSWCA described as a 'certain nervousness' within government as to inflation.<sup>11</sup> While Horner was delighted; 'I want national organisation. I want national control of wage policy' as south Wales miners earned 'two-thirds of what the miners in the West Midlands are getting' (Arnot, 1979, pp. 22-23), the membership

was impatient. They rejected the first flat rate addition by a margin of 9 to 1 (Arnot, 1961, p. 290) as many believed they could gain more through district negotiations, although enough regional delegates within the miners' national federation voted in favour to secure approval. But disapproval was ominous; a concerned SWMF Executive Committee noted 'considerable misunderstanding' as to Horner's speech at the national conference that approved the offer, ordering 20,000 copies of the speech for distribution throughout the coalfield.<sup>12</sup>

## **2: June 1940 to May 1942**

Complacency was shattered by the fall of France in mid-1940. Exports collapsed, prompting forty-three pits to suspend operations (Court, 1951; 83) and by November 1940, 21.6 per cent of insured miners throughout Wales were suspended or unemployed.<sup>13</sup> The crisis prompted the Trades Union Congress to accept the Conditions of Employment National Arbitration Order (Order 1305) in June 1940 which made strikes and lock-outs illegal and introduced compulsory arbitration. But the order could not prevent workers organising their own, usually short lived, unofficial strikes. Such actions characterised wartime IR, but officials were reluctant to prosecute strikers for fear of further inflaming the workforce. Although the threat of invasion prompted the number of strikes to fall to 11 in Q3 1940, miners defended their interests; an attempt to remove a customary holiday day to visit the Neath Fair was resisted successfully.

The Conservative-Labour coalition government in office from May 1940 responded to the sudden manpower surplus by amending the rules exempting miners from conscription, enabling many to join the services, and placing unemployed miners in other industries. The south Wales workforce promptly reduced from 128,470 in 1940 to 111,649 in 1941 (Williams, 1985, p. 300) with losses concentrated amongst younger workers. Meanwhile, governance

structures established by the previous government barely functioned. The national Coal Production Council met once from November 1940 to March 1941 (Supple, 1987) and many pit production committees lapsed. Failure was prompted by their competing roles; miners' representatives preferred to discuss production topics including poor management and inadequate equipment, while managers preferred IR topics such as absenteeism (Court, 1951).

The appointment of Labour Cabinet Ministers dismayed the mineowners but prompted an understanding that greater co-operation with the SWMF was needed to stave off government intervention. The MSWCA, for example, warned its members in July 1940 that prolonged industrial unrest would prompt intervention given the 'current composition of the government' and that 'if any form of government control was implemented, it would be very hard to have it revoked at the conclusion of hostilities.'<sup>14</sup> It promptly obtained permission from its members to assume negotiating responsibilities with the Fed over all disputes, and both sides met frequently and informally in an attempt to resolve individual disputes (Fishman, 2010).

Meanwhile, Horner balanced urging co-operation to boost production with defending members' interests. Co-operation was demonstrated at a Coal Production Conference in Cardiff in June 1940 when the three institutions agreed that all sides should work jointly.<sup>15</sup> But he stressed members' interests at the SWMF annual conference, focussing on the need to 'maintain complete independence' and avoid 'unhealthy relationships'.<sup>16</sup> This uneasy dynamic reflected endemic and inevitable mistrust between both sides of the industry, recorded verbatim in the minutes of the joint committee established in 1940 to discuss production. In one meeting in mid-1941, for example, Williams told Horner that 'I've been attempting for years to prove to you on your side, so that you could prove to the men, that we are working for you even more

than you are working for us' to which Horner replied drily that 'there are no facts to substantiate your explanation' before both leaders embarked on a lengthy argument about cheese rations.<sup>17</sup>

The workforce viewed their leadership's rhetoric on co-operation with cynicism; 'sacrifices are always one sided' complained one miner in November 1940. The need to retain members' support was one factor prompting the SWMF to fiercely oppose government attempts to transfer labour, widely detested given the resemblance to pre-war industrial transference scheme as well as the risks to production efficiency posed by what Horner described as 'denuding [south Wales] districts of their youth'.<sup>18</sup> The Fed responded to a planned transfer of three thousand miners to Somerset by demanding higher wages in that coalfield, and that all transferees be supplied with food, lodging and 'other allowances'.<sup>19</sup> But the government did not want to intervene in district wages negotiations, and dropped its proposal. Meanwhile, the SWMF was able to exploit mineowners' fear of state intervention to obtain better terms for injured miners as the MSWCA again feared that a refusal to settle might prompt intervention.<sup>20</sup>

By early 1941 coalfield IR was impacted by two new factors. One was how industrial mobilisation to produce munitions accelerated prompting a greater demand for coal that in turn reversed the surplus of mining labour. The other was the arrival of those industries in south Wales. Before the war, alternative employment in the coalfield was scarce but state-owned Royal Ordnance Factories (R.O.F.s) within commuting distance of coalfield settlements were employing tens of thousands of workers by 1941. Simultaneously, private companies were relocating to the area, including to the Treforest Industrial Estate at the southern edge of the coalfield that became a centre for manufacturing aircraft components (Gooberman, 2021).



New factories prompted two concerns. The first was wage disparities. Skilled male workers at the R.O.F.'s earned between £6 13s and £7 19s per week, significantly more than the £4 6s earned by miners.<sup>21</sup> Munitions shifts were long, but mining was far more strenuous and dangerous with 172 miners killed throughout Wales in 1941 (Williams, 1985, p. 333). Surface trades exhibited similar disparities, as foreshadowed in mid-1940 when all the fitters at Ffaldau colliery resigned because their weekly wage of 67 shillings compared poorly to the 83 shillings that similarly skilled men were earning at an R.O.F construction site.<sup>22</sup> Welfare disparities also existed as only 17 collieries had canteens by 1941 but munitions factories were provisioned generously.<sup>23</sup> The second concern was that munitions factories were largely staffed by women. They had been almost entirely excluded from pre-war industrial employment, when occupancy rates for married women in some valleys was below 5 per cent (Williams, 1996). Their new-found earning ability was unexpected and often prompted resentment amongst the male mining workforce, especially when female wages approached or exceeded male earnings (Williams, 2002).

The government's response to labour shortages included the Essential Work Order of March 1941 that prevented miners leaving the industry and granted extensive authority to National Service Officers at the Ministry of Labour and National Service, as well as Local Appeal Boards (McIllroy and Campbell, 2003). But neither side of industry was content. Mineowners were pleased that miners could not leave but resented the loss of the ultimate disciplinary sanction of dismissal which now required official approval.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile, miners were trapped in dangerous and poorly paid jobs. The government asked ex-miners working in other industries to return but they were unsurprisingly reluctant; of the 22,000 registered at employment exchanges in Wales and asked, 17,000 refused. Thirteen thousand of these were asked again, but only 1,350 agreed.<sup>25</sup> Widespread anger was summarised in mid-1941 when

the Blaenavon section of the SWMF wrote to Minister of Labour and National Service Ernest Bevin to ask, 'give us a square deal and we'll produce the coal'.<sup>26</sup>

Meanwhile, the entry of the Soviet Union into the war in June 1941 ended 'anti-imperialist' opposition to the war within the SWMF. The Communist Party switched to a pro-war position and strikes were fewer where it was strongest, notably within the traditionally more militant central coalfield area. But underlying grievances remained salient and although strikes fell to a weekly average of four throughout 1941, ingrained discontent meant that individual grievances could prompt large-scale action. In September 1941, for example, one miner at Ffaldau Colliery disputed his pay and 515 colleagues struck for seven days after which work resumed to permit negotiations.<sup>27</sup> Discontent meant that while the Fed formalised its closed shop with the MSWCA to include employer deduction of dues,<sup>28</sup> other agreements faced resistance. In January 1942, for example, a delegate conference rejected a renewal of the conciliation agreements in operation since 1937, before narrowly approving them in March (Broomfield, 1981).

By mid-1941, miners' average weekly earnings throughout the UK were ranked fifty-ninth out of ninety-seven industries and a sense of crisis grew.<sup>29</sup> Horner argued that there was 'a terrific feeling in the coalfield' that was 'elastic: if you go and push against it, it has no clear justification which it can express and articulate and it gives, but immediately afterwards it comes back (Francis and Smith, 1981, p. 398). In Q2 1942 29 strikes involved 19,297 miners, the highest level since 1939. These included those at Tarenni Colliery where 500 miners objected to their wages and adopted ca'canny (go slow) before work resumed, and at Albion Colliery where 1,200 miners struck to support an apprentice sent out of the pit for refusing to obey an order.<sup>30</sup> Horner responded by arguing in favour of greater production at a mass meeting

in one restive area in April, but SWMF Secretary Iestyn Williams told the MSWCA privately that if any of the owners thought that Horner could ‘go down there and wipe out all the troubles in the Anthracite district in one meeting, he [the owner] is mistaken.’<sup>31</sup>

But the most dramatic disputes involved apprentices who worked from the age of 14, were paid less than adults and suffered accidents disproportionately. The Ministry of Labour and National Service Regional IR Officer noted that their ‘sweethearts and sisters receive bigger wages than they do’ while the ‘disciplinary hold of the SWMF on its members has been exemplary [but] it has been left to [the apprentices to] throw off restraint’.<sup>32</sup> A meeting of some 800 apprentices at Trelaw in the Rhondda produced a ‘Pit Boy’s Charter’ calling for better wages and conditions (Broomfield, 1981). Fed attempts at conciliation failed, its officials were shouted down in mass meetings and 10,000 apprentices struck in May and June 1942.

By April 1942, even the *Economist* argued for ‘temporary socialisation’ as ‘no other industry of equal importance has abandoned so little of its peacetime methods’.<sup>33</sup> Labour MP and President of the Board of Trade Hugh Dalton proposed rationing but was opposed by owners and Conservative MPs who feared a precursor to nationalisation. The industry became a test of party strength within the governing coalition and the proposals were shelved after Conservative MPs threatened to vote against them (Jeffreys, 1996). But while the government opposed increasing wages further or creating a national agreement, telling the miners’ national federation that ‘you will have neither, the government are adamant’ (Horner, 1960; 164) it was being dragged towards intervention. In April 1942, it appointed a committee to identify measures to secure ‘such practical control over the workings of the mines as is necessary to increase [...] war-time efficiency’ (Supple, 1987, p. 522).

### **3: June 1942 – December 1943**

The need to exert ‘practical control’ prompted the government’s White Paper of June 1942. But the government was unable to overcome industrial interest groups and outline a fully workable approach; Ebbw Vale MP Aneurin Bevan argued that parliamentary debates on the White Paper were conducted in a ‘tepid atmosphere because all the various interests have been squared beforehand’.<sup>34</sup>

IR interventions were twofold. One was a Board of Investigation under Lord Greene to examine pay and propose new procedures for settling wages. SWMF representative Ebby Edwards told the board that ‘there is revolution in the coalfields [...] because of the great disparity between miners’ wages and [...] those employed in munition[s]’ while Williams, chair of the regional and national mineowners associations, argued that there was a ‘spirit abroad throughout the industry [...] of a very dangerous nature’,<sup>35</sup> proposing output and attendance bonuses. Government concern prompted the board to report in less than two weeks (Arnot, 1961), recommending a flat rate increase for all miners, a national weekly minimum wage, output bonuses, and national machinery for wages negotiation.<sup>36</sup> The government accepted the recommendations and although the output bonus proved unworkable, miners’ average pay throughout the UK rose from fifty-ninth out of almost one hundred industries to twenty-third (Court, 1951, p. 266). The other intervention was national machinery, but this was not to appear until the subsequent year. But the prospect of machinery prompted Horner to press for the replacement of the Miners’ Federation of Great Britain with a unified national union to boost miners’ collective power, an approach formally supported by the federation in mid-1942.

Meanwhile, a new Ministry of Fuel and Power headed by the Liberal MP for Pembrokeshire Gwilym Lloyd George was created to oversee a 'dual control' system dividing governance between mineowners and state appointed Regional Controllers. But although the Controllers had strategic responsibility for the industry, their role was unclear. Mineowners retained management responsibility and could refuse any instructions from the controllers on 'safety' grounds. A memorandum circulated later by the Ministry of Fuel and Power admitted that Controllers were 'given a copy of the White Paper, told they were the Minister's representatives in the regions and asked to carry on'.<sup>37</sup> Meanwhile, pit production committees lost their role within absenteeism, and were to focus on production. Disciplinary offences were transferred to Ministry of Labour and National Service Regional Investigation Officers, able under an amended Essential Work Order to recommend prosecution if miners 'impeded' operations.<sup>38</sup> The ineffectual Coal Production Council was replaced by another advisory body, the National Coal Board, while the industry-run levies and compensations that stabilised finances were remodelled into a government-administered Coal Charges Account that subsidised less efficient districts such as south Wales (Ashworth, 1953).

But the industry remained characterised by discontent. Even the limited state influence within 'dual control' annoyed colliery managers with one complaining that they had been 'stripped of virtually every vestige of authority' over the workforce.<sup>39</sup> Meanwhile, apprentice strikes continued but although miners' anger was widespread, co-operation continued; the Regional IR Officer at the Ministry of Labour and National Service noted approvingly in July 1942 that apprentice strikers had been 'dealt with firmly' by SWMF officers.<sup>40</sup>

Regional controllers focused on two activities. One was 'concentration' that closed less productive pits, releasing miners for transfer. The Ministry of Fuel and Power noted that only

6.3 per cent of south Wales miners were employed on highly productive work, far fewer than those in geologically favourable coalfields.<sup>41</sup> Discrepancies offered potential for concentration, but the ministry knew that transfer was unpopular and proposed that ‘Scotsmen should be transferred first, rather than Welshmen’.<sup>42</sup> Nervousness was justified. In 1942 the Regional Controller attempted to transfer thirty-one miners to England but faced protests from railway and teachers’ unions, as well as chapels, and retreated.<sup>43</sup> By April 1943, only one pit had been closed while other schemes had not proceeded due to fear of labour unrest.<sup>44</sup> The other activity was mechanization but this proceeded slowly (HMSO, 1946, pp. 64-67), hampered by geology, absenteeism, the difficulty of imposing new working practices, and mineowners’ preference for cheaper pneumatic picks over more efficient but more expensive coal cutting machinery.

The limited impacts of the controller meant that the Greene Award’s calming impact on IR was short-lived. As early as August 1942 when the Miners’ Federation of Great Britain was appealing for greater output, SWMF leaders were expressing concern as to rising workforce militancy. The Rhondda area secretary, for example, argued that the coalfield workforce should not ‘drift along complacency clinging to old manners, traditions, and customs, when their comrades [...] in many other lands are even now working as slaves’.<sup>45</sup> But as anger re-emerged, the Fed risked losing control over its members. A strike at Penrhiwceiber in August 1942 was sparked by new owners changing wage calculations, prompting the earnings of a few men to dip temporarily below the minimum wage. Horner addressed a mass meeting to advise a return to work but he was rejected, as was the Regional Controller; 1,100 miners stopped work followed by those in surrounding collieries. Horner then warned the owners that their intransigence risked a larger conflagration, they agreed to binding arbitration by the Regional Controller who found in favour of the miners (Francis and Smith, 1981). Nevertheless, as always, opinion was not monolithic. In late 1942, for example, miners where the Communist

Party was well organised sought to raise production; those at Fernhill colliery in the Rhondda organized 'shock brigades' while a committee at Onllwyn No. 1 pit in the Dulais Valley organised a 'Stalingrad week' productivity drive.<sup>46</sup>

But by Q2 1943 the number of strikes reached 49, highest since the outbreak of war, and 37,347 working days were lost. Many disputes followed a familiar pattern where generalised dissatisfaction meant that a few miners could catalyse large actions. In the first week of May 1943, for example, 700 miners at Oakdale Navigation Colliery struck over the non-payment of minimum wage to one man, 101 miners at Penrhiwceibr Colliery struck in support of a miner who refused to be transferred from one coal face within the pit to another, while 180 miners at Carway Colliery in Kidwelly struck seeking the removal of a 'brutal and tyrannical' official.<sup>47</sup> Sympathy strikes were also common with the largest prompted when 25 men at Tarenni Colliery were fined for ca'cenny. Most refused to pay and were gaoled, prompting 5,000 miners from surrounding collieries to strike for a week in August, before work resumed when miners appointed a deputation to appeal to the Home Secretary.<sup>48</sup>

Difficulties forced the government to resort to industrial conscription in late 1943. Conscripts were chosen by lottery for diversion from the services and were known as 'Bevin Boys'. However, many struggled to adapt to an unfamiliar environment and their avoidable absenteeism was double that of other miners.<sup>49</sup> But the Regional Controller was reluctant to launch prosecutions under the Essential Work Order for fear of creating 'martyrs', warning that apprentices, and miners in general, were 'often defiant and will not respond to any remedy'.<sup>50</sup>

A turning point in IR was reached in March 1943 when the government finally granted the Greene Board's recommendation of national wage machinery. The structure of such machinery

emerged from negotiations, with the employers' side led by MSWCA Chair Williams given his role as President of the Mining Association of Great Britain. The machinery had two components; a Joint National Negotiating Committee formed equally from representatives from both sides of industry, and a National Reference Tribunal (known as the Porter Tribunal after its chair) formed from independent members to settle issues that the committee could not resolve. The Government announced that the new arrangements would continue into peacetime, and the SWMF recognised them as the national machinery it had long demanded.<sup>51</sup> Meanwhile, Williams argued that the machinery assisted employers by removing 'from the public mind the idea that the industry was incapable of managing its own affairs without government intervention', reducing the chances of nationalisation 'for a considerable period'.<sup>52</sup>

In August 1943, MSWCA Secretary Iestyn Williams argued that the recent history of coalfield IR was one of 'gradual progress from independent to collective bargaining, and from distrust and antagonism to increasing confidence and collaboration.'<sup>53</sup> But this opinion was for public consumption, and relations between the workforce and managers were unsalvageable when the owners retained operational and financial control, and wages and working conditions remained poor. Although miners supported their union's stance on the war, neither they nor their communities would suspend their dissatisfaction to focus on greater production. A Mass Observation study of Blaina, for example, found that while most residents expressed 'the feeling that they would just be scrap' after the war, others argued that they needed to gain power to force a sustainable future for the industry and their communities (Supple, 1987: 578).

Divisions were symbolised within Pit Production Committees. The Ministry of Labour and National Service admitted in August 1942 that in Wales most had 'never functioned satisfactorily'.<sup>54</sup> Although the SWMF leadership supported committees, and Horner argued



that 'we have to inculcate into the minds of [miners] who have never had to do this before that they are responsible for production',<sup>55</sup> many struggled for relevance amidst cynicism and mistrust. The Penallta Pit Committee, for example, collapsed in March 1943 after the manager complained as to having been 'grossly insulted' by a worker representative who accused him of dishonesty, while wider views were reflected by a worker on the Abergorki Committee when commenting on a government poster promoting the contribution made by a ton of coal to the war effort: 'the ton of coal is the thing, but the miner is still the bottom dog'.<sup>56</sup>

Meanwhile, the Ministry asked Regional Controllers why production was falling. South Wales Controller William Jones explained in detail how many problems had fused to create a barely governable industry, characterised by a 'general unsettled feeling' where 'very slight cases are sufficient to cause strikes'. First, absenteeism was increasing but he hesitated to act on the contested issue of compulsory Sunday night shifts as 'we should fail if any defence was put up'. Second, apathy was prompted by unchanged production arrangements that lacked the 'rapid change and improvisation' of munitions. Third, a lack of nutritious food and pithead baths produced fatigue. Fourth, disputes over piece rates and allowances remained common despite the Greene Award. Fifth, managers were struggling to adjust to war-time conditions, prompting 'frayed nerves'. Finally, Pit Production Committees descended into 'bickering and arguments' and achieved little. Unusually for a public official, the Controller blamed the government. He argued that miners felt that they would be 'forgotten and neglected' after the war, proposing that the state should assume greater operational control and outline its post-war plans for the industry.<sup>57</sup>

All this meant that a year after dual control was introduced Gwilym Lloyd George defensively told the War Cabinet that its main achievement was preventing a worse situation.<sup>58</sup> Turbulent

IR even prompted the involvement of Lord Victor Rothschild, head of MI5's counter-sabotage section. He read a *Western Mail* article alleging sabotage but after corresponding with police and civil authorities as to 'unrest amongst workers', incidents of alleged sabotage were resolved as 'malicious damage' by dissatisfied youths.<sup>59</sup> Continued discontent meant that the MSWCA recognised that the 'old approach [...] where we are the masters and they are the men' was 'outmoded',<sup>60</sup> and agreed to discuss post-war arrangements with the SWMF. But neither side would compromise on ownership, the government remained reluctant to act and Churchill eventually calmed the national debate by ruling out nationalization before a general election. Meanwhile, the new national wage machinery operated. In September 1943, the Porter Tribunal adjudicated on a national claim for apprentices, but younger miners were disappointed, prompting further strikes. But the Tribunal's most important task was adjudicating on demands for an increased adult minimum wage.

#### **4: January 1944 – June 1945**

On 22 January 1944 the Porter Tribunal recommended an increased minimum wage but no change to piece work rates. The government supported the recommendations, but the absence of rises to piece work and allowances meant that the relative positioning of the highest paid miners to their junior colleagues worsened. Weekly output fell as widespread fury prompted volatile IR. In the week after the announcement, 1,513 miners in five pits struck against the award, joining seven other strikes prompted by causes including anger at management for disciplining workers arriving late, and the refusal of one apprentice to work with a colleague.<sup>61</sup>

The problem of differentials was so obvious that the MSWCA and the Fed quickly took advantage of their close relationship to negotiate increased piece rates and allowances.<sup>62</sup> But

the government refused to raise the price of coal to pay for these as it feared setting a precedent for other industries, inadvertently sparking the worst IR crisis of the war. By early March, 190 pits were idle as 97,000 miners out of 110,000 in south Wales had struck, while interrupted coal supply threatened to disrupt industrial production including that of munitions.<sup>63</sup> Any such threat had been offset previously by the buffer created by the loss of export markets and the government's success in governing coal distribution and consumption, activities that both lacked interest groups able to mobilise political support. These dynamics had offset declining production, but the scale of the Porter strikes risked overwhelming the system. A Fed delegate conference on 11 March heard calls from Horner and thirteen miners' MPs for return amidst worry at the impact of strikes on preparations for D-Day. Fearing that prolonged action would impede the war effort and reduce its bargaining ability, the SWMF engineered a return. A ballot was hurriedly organised for 13 March, when 60,983 members voted to return but 43,248 voted against. Remaining dissatisfaction meant that it took until Friday for the Fed to persuade 90 per cent of their members to return amidst what the Executive Committee heard was 'complete chaos [...] men going in and coming out like a concertina' prompting 500,000 tons of production to be lost (Francis and Smith, 1981, p. 412).

Horner argued later that the miners should have refused to strike, criticizing 'irresponsible elements in our own ranks' especially younger workers who did not understand 'how easy it is to break the power and authority of a great trade union'.<sup>64</sup> The fiasco prompted baffled fury from the government: it condemned mineowners for negotiating with unions, while the Regional IR Officer at the Ministry of Labour and National Service compared the 'mental condition' of miners in south Wales to a 'sick patient [during] a long and troublesome illness [who] displays restlessness, querulous and a general unreasonableness'.<sup>65</sup> Meanwhile, Bevin furiously and publicly denounced the coal industry as a 'black spot', telling miners to stop

creating ‘anarchy’ through ‘wrecking your leaders and industrial agreements’, warning them that large-scale industrial unrest was endangering his economy-wide policy of relying on joint industrial co-operation to regulate IR and that ‘other steps’ might become necessary; ‘we are not going to lose this war, whether it is apprentices or miners or anybody else’.<sup>66</sup>

The inevitable result of the government’s misjudgement, described diplomatically by the official historian as displaying ‘traces of confusion [...] a failure to keep pace with events’ (Court, 1951, p. 257) was retreat. Its efforts to keep wages negotiations at arms’ length collapsed and Bevin took control. He ignored the mineowners to negotiate an agreement with the Miners’ Federation of Great Britain, with Horner in a leading role, that favoured the miners (Fishman, 2003; Bullock, 1967). In April, the government raised coal prices to preserve differentials and address ‘certain other matters concerning allowances peculiar to south Wales’.<sup>67</sup> The last traces of the unpopular district ascertainties disappeared, and the government promised to preserve minimum wages for at least four years (Arnot, 1961). Miners’ weekly earnings throughout the UK were now fourteenth out of almost one hundred industries, with higher earnings elsewhere often attributable to overtime within munitions factories (Court, 1951); by 1945 average earnings per shift in south Wales were almost double those of 1938 (Williams, 1985, p. 175). But productivity continued to decline and there were 43 strikes in the last quarter of 1944. Familiar themes remained; 159 ‘Bevin Boys’ at a training centre struck in September demanding paid holidays, management experienced ‘a little difficulty’ in handling them, forcing the Ministry of Labour and National Service to intervene, while in the subsequent week 1,900 miners at three pits struck to support 30 apprentices dissatisfied as to their pay.<sup>68</sup>

In December 1944, the Regional Controller issued another appeal for greater production, prompting the ever critical *Western Mail* to editorialise sarcastically that ‘only a statistician could tell how many appeals of this urgent character have been made by miners’ leaders, ministers and industrialists, all, alas to no purpose’.<sup>69</sup> Meanwhile, the owners continued their obstructionist approach; the Powell Duffryn benefit society, for example, refused to admit examiners who were union members into its pension schemes. The government meekly refused to intervene, merely asking the examiners’ union to refrain from ‘precipitate’ action.<sup>70</sup>

By late 1944, IR machinery had been transformed and national bargaining strengthened regional union leaders such as Horner, who had long argued for a cohesive national union instead of regional unions grouped into a loose national federation. The concept gathered pace nationally as a means of avoiding mineowners’ ‘divide and rule’ tactics and in January 1945, the SWMF merged into a new National Union of Mineworkers. The transformed position of the workforce was symbolised by Horner’s address to the Fed’s final conference; ‘Let it be clearly known to all that it will be impossible [...] to reduce the standards of the miner to pre-war depression levels’ as ‘any attack on [...] wage and living standards must inevitably bring economic ruin to the country’.<sup>71</sup> But miners’ leaders knew that a national IR system alone would not give them the security they wanted. Horner argued that while the SWMF should focus on consolidating its gains, the only permanent solution ‘this side of socialism’ was to amalgamate regional coalfields into a UK-wide nationalized entity.<sup>72</sup> While all sides presented different ideas as the July 1945 election approached, they generally agreed with the MSWCA member who told a meeting of his association that the ‘present methods could not continue after the war.’<sup>73</sup>

## Conclusion

Literature on the wartime coal industry has two main foci. One is broad national surveys encompassing IR (e.g., Court, 1951; Supple 1987). Of the three IR institutions (Dunlop, 1957), unions and their leaders have been studied most (e.g., Arnot, 1979; Taylor, 2003; Fishman, 2010). The other focus is on regional coalfields. Many studies again examine unions (e.g., Francis and Smith, 1981) while others have examined the wartime politics of organised labour (e.g., Gildart 2009; McIlroy and Campbell, 2011) and workforce experiences (e.g., Broomfield, 1981). Less commonly considered, however, are interactions between regional union, owner, and state organisations, and how these shaped IR given the regional character of the industry and its governing institutions.

This article has sought to address this gap through asking: how did the three actors interact to govern coalfield IR in south Wales? It makes two arguments; their contours are reflected within regions throughout Britain as similar governance structures existed in each, even if other coalfield characteristics varied widely.

The first argument is that the war transformed the relative power of the three IR institutions given the need to produce sufficient coal to fuel the war economy. The greatest transformation was experienced by the SWMF. But miners' militancy was a threat and an opportunity; a threat as militancy was sufficient to potentially threaten the war effort, with the risk in extremis of decisive government action as threatened by Bevin in 1944, and an opportunity as the Fed could use its authority over the workforce to implicitly offer calmer IR and higher production in return for concessions. In the event, the SMWF and the other regional unions forming the Miners' Federation of Great Britain were able to seize the opportunity offered by militancy to

marginalise the owners and lever IR reforms from a reluctant and divided government. But the SMWF was not interested in longer term regional approaches, seeking to boost bargaining power through creating national IR systems, before entrenching these through state ownership of a unified industry.

The government, meanwhile, initially opposed intervention and wanted to continue peacetime approaches to IR. It intervened to prevent miners leaving the industry, and outlawed strikes but fear of further radicalising the workforce prompted a reluctance to prosecute those taking industrial action. Short-lived but frequent unofficial action proliferated, over half of which gained some concessions or a promise of further investigation. Nevertheless, crises meant that the government was forced to accelerate its IR interventions to raise national minimum wages and create national voluntary bargaining machinery. It was subsequently forced to take control of the machinery to negotiate directly with the regional unions, under the umbrella of their national federation, to avoid interrupting preparations for D-Day. The state was key to the creation of collective IR machinery, a role mirrored throughout the wartime economy that foreshadowed the post-war era of widespread collective IR (Howell, 2005). But the government had to balance competing interests from both sides of industry; each was well represented within the government's political coalition and union pressure was unable to secure wartime nationalization.

Finally, the MSWCA wanted to maintain pre-war IR approaches but gradually lost ground as it had no solutions to workforce discontent and poor productivity, apart from an impractical and politically impossible disciplinary approach. Nevertheless, coal owners exploited their political leverage to retain ownership in the absence of any sustained threat to the war economy posed by declining productivity and output. But by 1945, the problems of the industry were so

apparent that even the mineowners formed part of a consensus accepting that reverting to pre-war modes of industrial fragmentation was impossible.

The second argument is that shifts in relative power enabled the SWMF, and other regional unions, to achieve their goals within IR; the recreation of national bargaining machinery and obtaining higher wages. A closed shop was introduced from 1939 and later solidified, and in 1940 national wage premiums to reflect increased living costs were layered onto regional agreements despite the initial opposition of government. This approach was then supplanted in 1943 with the reintroduction of voluntary national wage bargaining, long desired by regional unions such as the Fed. In the following year, however, the state's attempts to keep bargaining at arm's length collapsed amidst industrial crises. It was forced to intervene, and Bevin ignored the mineowners to dictate terms designed to placate the workforce and avoid disruption to transport and munitions production. Meanwhile, miners' pay increased steadily and their pre-war position near the foot of the industrial wages ranking was reversed by 1945. Nevertheless, the workforce could not be calmed without nationalization but the unwieldy and ineffective 'dual control' system from 1942 left ownership unchanged, although all actors recognised that the status quo was untenable.

In conclusion, a regionally constituted industry can be best understood through a regional lens. The importance of the industry combined with chronically turbulent IR to gift regional unions influence sufficient to transform IR systems. Meanwhile, the government recognised regional dynamics by appointing regional controllers, and SWMF and MSWCA leaders drove policy within their national representative bodies. Not only did the war transform IR, it also foreshadowed the nationalization that enabled Horner to tell a National Union of Mineworkers' conference in 1946 that 'the pits are ours. We can say what can be done with them.'<sup>74</sup>



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- <sup>1</sup> South Wales Miners Library (Hereafter SWML) *President's Address to SWMF Annual Conference, 1944*, 5.
- <sup>2</sup> The National Archives (Hereafter TNA) LAB 34/54-57. *Trade Disputes*.
- <sup>3</sup> TNA, LAB 34/54, *Trade Disputes*, 1939.
- <sup>4</sup> TNA, LAB 12/82, *Ministry of Labour Monthly Report, Wales*, January 1940, 2.
- <sup>5</sup> TNA, POWE 20/62, *Board of Investigation into Miners' Claims*, 9 June 1942, 10.
- <sup>6</sup> *Western Mail*, 'South Wales Will Dig', 16 April 1940, 6.
- <sup>7</sup> SWML, *SWMF Conference, Cardiff*, 2 March 1940.
- <sup>8</sup> SWML, *President's Address to SWMF Annual Conference*, 1940.
- <sup>9</sup> TNA, POWE 22/225, *Note of the Under-Secretary for Mines Meeting with Mr Arthur Horner*, 20 October 1939. *Letter from the Under-Secretary for Mines to Mr Horner*, 4 November 1939.
- <sup>10</sup> National Library of Wales (Hereafter NLW), *MSWCOA General Meeting Minutes*, 6 November 1939; SWML, *SWMF Executive Committee Minutes*, 10 October 1939.
- <sup>11</sup> NLW, *MSWCOA Minutes*, 6 November 1939.
- <sup>12</sup> SWML, *SWMF Executive Committee Minutes*, 14 November 1939.
- <sup>13</sup> TNA, LAB 12/82, *Ministry of Labour Monthly Report, Wales*, 11 November 1940, 3.
- <sup>14</sup> NLW, *MSWCOA General Meeting Minutes*, 8 July 1940.
- <sup>15</sup> *Western Mail*, 'Plans to Increase South Wales Coal Production', 5 June 1940, 3.
- <sup>16</sup> SWML, *President's Address to SWMF Annual Conference*, 1940.
- <sup>17</sup> NLW, BT 4/9/1. *Joint Production Committee Minutes*, 7 April 1941.
- <sup>18</sup> NLW, BT 4/9/1. *Joint Production Committee Minutes*, 18 November 1940.
- <sup>19</sup> TNA, LAB 12/82, *Ministry of Labour Monthly Report, Wales*, September 1940, 3.
- <sup>20</sup> NLW, *MSWCOA General Meeting Minutes*, 12 August 1940.
- <sup>21</sup> TNA, POWE 20/62, *Royal Ordnance Factories, Typical Weekly Earnings; Estimated Average earnings per shift*, May 1942; *Estimated Average Earnings Per Shift*, 1942.
- <sup>22</sup> TNA, LAB 10/366, *Ministry of Labour Industrial Relations Officer, Wales Region, Weekly Report*, 27 April 1940.
- <sup>23</sup> NLW, BT 4/9/1. *Joint Production Committee Minutes*, 7 April 1941, 26.
- <sup>24</sup> NLW, *MSWCOA General Meeting Minutes*, 3 June 1941.
- <sup>25</sup> TNA, LAB 12/82, *Ministry of Labour Monthly Report, Wales*, August 1941, 7.
- <sup>26</sup> *Western Mail*, 21 July 1941, 'Miners' Protest to Mr Bevin', 3.

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- <sup>27</sup> TNA, LAB 34/56, *Trade Disputes*, 1941.
- <sup>28</sup> *Western Mail*, 'Closed Shop Plan for Welsh Pits', 9 May 1942, 2.
- <sup>29</sup> TNA, POWE 20/62, *Average Weekly Earnings, 1938-1942* [undated]
- <sup>30</sup> *Western Mail*, '1,200 Miners Idle after Dispute Over Boy', 15 May 1942, 1; TNA, LAB 34/57, *Trade Disputes*, 1942.
- <sup>31</sup> NLW, BT 4/9/1. *Joint Production Committee Minutes*, 16 February 1942, 22.
- <sup>32</sup> TNA, LAB 10/368, *Ministry of Labour Industrial Relations Officer, Wales Region, Weekly Report*. 30 May 1942.
- <sup>33</sup> *The Economist*, 'Shortage of Coal', 11 April 1942; 'Plan for Coal', 18 April 1942.
- <sup>34</sup> House of Commons, *Hansard*, Vol. 380, col. 1293, 11 June 1942.
- <sup>35</sup> TNA, POWE 20/62, *Board of Investigation into Miners' Claims, First Day*, 9 June 1942, 5, 13.
- <sup>36</sup> TNA, POWE 20/62, *Report of the Board of Investigation*, June 1942, 6-7.
- <sup>37</sup> TNA, POWE 20/83, *Memorandum Dealing with the Operation of the Coal Control*, 3 January 1944.
- <sup>38</sup> TNA, CAB 71/13, *Progress Report on Operation of the White Paper Scheme by the Minister of Fuel and Power*, 17 June 1942, 3.
- <sup>39</sup> *Western Mail*, 'Pit Managers Losing Authority', 11 October 1943.
- <sup>40</sup> TNA, LAB 10/368, *Ministry of Labour Industrial Relations Officer, Wales Region, Weekly Reports*. 4 July 1942, 1.
- <sup>41</sup> TNA, POWE 22/150, *Productivity of Individual Pits*, [undated], 3.
- <sup>42</sup> TNA, POWE 22/150, *Concentration Prospects*, 11 February 1943, 3.
- <sup>43</sup> TNA, LAB 8/1473/6, *History of Labour Supply from May 1940*, 6.
- <sup>44</sup> TNA, POWE 22/150, *Note for the Concentration Committee*, 12 April 1943, 3.
- <sup>45</sup> *Western Mail*, 'Miners Must Respond To War Appeal', 20 August 1942, 4.
- <sup>46</sup> *Colliery Guardian*, 19.9.1942; 23.10.1942; cited in Howells, 280-81.
- <sup>47</sup> TNA, LAB 34/57, *Trade Disputes 1943*.
- <sup>48</sup> TNA, LAB 34/57, *Trade Disputes 1943*.
- <sup>49</sup> TNA, POWE 26/441, *Letter from Ministry of Fuel and Power to National Conciliation Board*, 30 January 1945.
- <sup>50</sup> TNA, POWE 20/78, *Memorandum by the Regional Controller, Wales*, 5 June 1943, 8.
- <sup>51</sup> SWML, *SWMF Executive Report, 1942-43*, 2-5.

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- <sup>52</sup> NLW, *MSWCOA General Meeting Minutes*, 1 February 1943.
- <sup>53</sup> *Western Mail*, 'Growth of Goodwill in South Wales Coalfield', 19 August 1943.
- <sup>54</sup> TNA, LAB 12/82, *Ministry of Labour Monthly Report, Wales*, August 1942, 2.
- <sup>55</sup> NLW, BT 4/9/1. *Joint Production Committee Minutes*, 2 February 1942, 31.
- <sup>56</sup> NLW BT 3/5/9 *Penallta Pit Production Committee Minutes* [undated]; *Abergorki Pit Production Committee Minutes*, 1 November 1943.
- <sup>57</sup> TNA, POWE 20/78, *Memorandum by the Regional Controller, Wales*, 5 June 1943.
- <sup>58</sup> TNA, CAB 71/13, *Progress Report on Operation of the White Paper Scheme by the Minister of Fuel and Power*, 17<sup>th</sup> June 1943, 5.
- <sup>59</sup> *Western Mail*, 'Coal Output Impeded by Wilful Acts of Damage', 17 November 1942; POWE, 26/ 424, *Letter from Lord Rothschild*, 6 September 1943.
- <sup>60</sup> NLW, *MSWCOA General Meeting Minutes*, 22 March 1943.
- <sup>61</sup> TNA, LAB 10/466, *Ministry of Labour Industrial Relations Officer, Wales Region, Weekly Report*, 25 January 1944.
- <sup>62</sup> NLW, *MSWCOA General Meeting Minutes*, 28 February 1944.
- <sup>63</sup> TNA, LAB 10/466, *Ministry of Labour Industrial Relations Officer, Wales Region, Weekly Reports*. 10 March 1944.
- <sup>64</sup> SWML, *President's Address to SWMF Annual Conference*, 1944, 4-5.
- <sup>65</sup> TNA, LAB 10/446, *Ministry of Labour Industrial Relations Officer, Wales Region, Weekly Report*, 31 March 1944.
- <sup>66</sup> *Times*, 'Gravity of Strikes', 5 April 1944.
- <sup>67</sup> *Western Mail*, 'Minister's Pledge to Discuss Welsh Coalfield Aims', 9 March 1944, 1.
- <sup>68</sup> TNA, LAB 10/446, *Ministry of Labour Industrial Relations Officer, Wales Region, Weekly Report*, 8 September 1944; 15 September 1944.
- <sup>69</sup> *Western Mail*, 'Call for More Coal', 29 December 1944.
- <sup>70</sup> TNA, POWE 20/88, *Note on Clerical Workers at Powell Dyffryn*, 11 October 1944.
- <sup>71</sup> *The Miner*, 'Report on 1944-45 SWMF Annual Conference', April/May 1945, 7-8.
- <sup>72</sup> SWML, *SWMF Annual Conference Report 1944, Presidential Address*, 22.
- <sup>73</sup> NLW, *MSWCOA General Meeting Minutes*, 22 February 1944.
- <sup>74</sup> *NUM Special Conference Report*, 20 December 1946, 12. Cited in Taylor, 38.

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